State's Transit Lines Have Money Troubles

By JOHN LUNDQUIST

BALTIMORE (AP) — Within a few days the Salisbury Transit Co. is going out of business. The city will take over operation of the bus lines.

Last week a Circuitt Court judge named two receivers to handle affairs of Cumberland Transit Lines.

The giant Baltimore Transit Co. is telling the Public Service Commission it must have higher fares.

In both cities at the extreme ends of the state and in Baltimore in the middle the trouble was identical — money. The Salisbury and Cumberland companies went broke, and the BTC says it is headed for red ink if it doesn't get a five-cent increase.

Cities elsewhere in the state are having their transit troubles, too.

Salisbury Transit reported a net loss of $7,249.47 last year. It said that over a 10-year period it has gone $43,000 in the hole.

The city bought the company's rolling stock for $7,375 recently after the firm got an okay from the PSC to go out of business. Changeover from private to municipal operation is scheduled for Sept. 15.

The bill of complaint filed in the Cumberland case listed assets on May 31 of $49,369.13 and liabilities of $75,859.56.

Last year the company had a net loss of $8,977.20, compared with a profit of $6,490 in 1956.

A check of annual reports filed with the Public Service Commission shows that two other of Maryland's largest cities lost money in 1957. Transit lines in Annapolis and Frederick operated in the red.

At least three showed a profit for the year—Suburban Transit Co. at Silver Spring, Antietam Transit Co. in the Hagerstown area and the Baltimore Transit Co., which made nearly one million dollars but says it needs a new fare increase to avold a deficit in the coming year.

BTC said higher operating costs are responsible. It singled out recent pay increases for employes as a primary factor.

Here is the way things stacked up in several Maryland communities:

In Annapolis, the Arundel Bus Co. showed a let loss of $329.58 in 1957. However, number of passengers hauled went up to 875,545 in 1956 compared with 851,677 for the earlier year.

Frederick Transit Co. had a net loss of $3,174.01 last year compared with a deficit of $1,627.66 in 1956 although its passenger haul climbed from 283,905 in 1956 to 351,111 in 1957.

An increase of $6,324 in operating expenses accounted for the poorer showing in 1957.

Robert E. Mc Cauley, president of Frederick Transit, said the firm is doing better financially this year.

Suburban Transit Co. in the bustling area adjacent to Washington glowed with a fairly health look, reporting a net of $8,539 last year, or $5,428 over the previous 12 months. Passenger revenue for the comparative period was up $27,673.81 to a total of $332,659.83.

Antietam took over Potomac Edison Company's lines in mid 1957 and reported net income of $12,472.03 for its last half year operations. In its last full year of managing the bus line, Potomac Edison chalked up a net income of $38,716.

Baltimore is a special case. Although the company has been making money in recent years, it has done so by raising fares and thereby accelerating the alienation of its passengers.

At present BTC is seeking a hike in its basic fare from 20 to 25 cents except from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. when it would remain at 20.

And it has told the PSC it will probably have to come back pleading for another increase within a short time even if it is granted the five-cent increase.

Last year the company had a net income of $996,936, more than double the $444,429 of 1956 when it was bogged down for 39 days by a strike of drivers and other employes.

Baltimoreans have shied away more and more from public transportation. Whereas the BTC carried 177,431,000 passengers in 1951, in 1957 it hauled 117,208,265. This year it's running about eight million behind that pace.

It isn't just Maryland cities which have their woes. The aching pains are apparent in communities across the country, and in many cases the symptoms are the same.

The villain giving public transportation a hard time is the automobile. What the auto did to the horse it's now doing to buses and trolleys.

Ever since World War II people have come to think of a private car as essential as a home. They like to drive where they're going, not wait for a bus. Suburban living has accelerated tthe trend toward the two-car family.

As business drops off, transit companies have to cut back their schedules and increase fare rates to stay in the black. That chills more patrons.

A big drop in passengers usually follows in the wake of a strike. During the shutdown, office workers have walked to their jobs, hitchhiked, joined car pools or taken taxis. Some of them don't go back to buses and trolleys. Baltimore Transit suffered a 10 per cent decrease in passengers during the first 12 weeks after a 39-day strike of drivers in 1956.

For years BTC has complained about what it considers an unfair tax load, pointing specifically to the three per cent gross receipts tax. The company figures it paid a total tax bill of more than $2,400,000 in 1957.

Critics of BTC have complained its directors have been more interested in skimming off profits than in giving the city a workable, growing transit system.

The city's commissioner of transit and traffic, Henry Barnes, recently suggested a plan for consolidating 35 routes into 19. Some of the re-routing had been outlined earlier by the BTC.

Barnes pointed out these revamped lines would get more patrons to where they wanted to go without the necessity of transferring.

Other plans for speeding up bus service in the big city include more express runs, which would mean fewer stops, and reserving the curb lane for mass transportation vehicles, except when private autos make right hand turns.

In neighboring Washington, D.C., Transit President O. Roy Chalk remarked earlier this year that things were looking pretty good. The company had 177,181,570 revenue passengers in 1957, slightly above the previous year's total.

Still, the company's net of $520,150 was far below the $936,312 its predecessor, Capital Transit, made in 1952. D.C. Transit took over the lines two years ago and got tax concessions from Congress which improved its financial posture.

Farmer Income Makes Advance

CHARLESTON, W. Va. (UPI)—The Federal-State Crop Reporting Service said today that income of West Virginia farmers in August was slightly above that of July.

New crop apples averaged about 10 per cent higher than in 1957 although peach prices showed a sharp drop as the main crop volume went to market.

Wholesale milk prices were up last month, advancing 30 cents per hundred-weight. Cattle prices also showed an increase while poultry was down. Grain prices showed little change.

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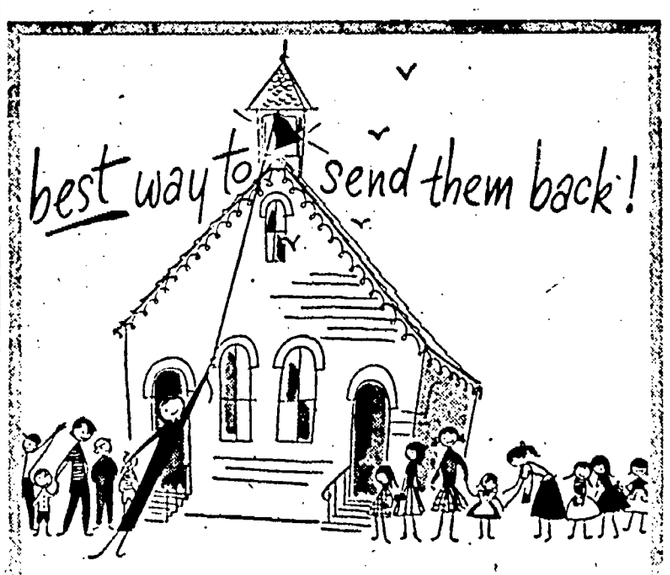

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Trinity Church Guild Will Host District Conference

WESTERNPORT — Mrs. Billie Jane Fleek, secretary of the Moorefield District of the Wesleyan Service Guild, gave a report on a guild assembly she attended at St. Louis, at a recent meeting of the Guild of Trinity Methodist Church, held at the home of Mrs. Harry Lee Biggs, Hammond Street. She also conducted the devotions.

Mrs. Marjorie Ahlfeld, president, who presided, announced that the local guild will be host to a district meeting to be held at Trinity Methodist Church on Sunday, October 12.

Miss Katherine Crawford, will be in charge of the program and the refreshment committee will be comprised of Miss Adair Welton, Mrs. Betty Brundige and Miss Marie Clark.

Mrs. Ahlfield also stated that the Fall Festival sponsored by the Woman's Society of Christian Service will be held at Trinity Church on Thursday, October 30.

Members of the guild were asked to help serve the dinner which will be held that evening. The group will have Christmas cards and church note paper on sale at their table.

It was also announced that the WSCS will hold a birthday party at the church Thursday, September 25. The guild will be in charge of the January and June tables.

Following the business season, Mrs. Victor Uhl was given a surprise shower.

Refreshments were served. Miss Mary Louise Biggs was assistant hostess.

Firemen Slate McCoole Circus As Fund Project

KEYSER—The two local area volunteer fire-fighting units, Keyser Volunteer Fire Company and McCoole Volunteer Fire Company have united for the presentation of a three-ring circus at the "Y" grounds in McCoole tomorrow.

The performances will be for the purpose of raising funds for the two companies for the purchase of needed equipment.

Moves From Keyser

KEYSER—Glenn Jackson has moved to Short Gap where he is operating Woodlawn Inn. Jackson was the operator of a restaurant on Armstrong Street, for about ten years, and later operated the restaurant at the Keyser Bus Terminal.

Visited Mother

PIEDMONT — Mr. and Mrs. Vincent O'Brien, Princeton, W. Va., visited his mother, Mrs. Ruth O'Brien, 43 Harrison Street.

Specialist Airs West Virginia's Soil Bank Plan

MORGANTOWN — The United States Government has just announced its 1959 Soil Bank program for taking farm land out of production, according to Kenneth P. Brundage, Extension farm management specialist at West Virginia University.

Farmers may rent their crop and hay land to the Government for periods of three to 10 years. In return, yearly payments will be made to the landowner. Payments for crop land will range from $13 to $16 per acre in various counties. Adjustments can be made to increase or decrease this figure in terms of the land's productivity, Brundage explained.

Hay land will normally be paid for at one-half rate of crop land unless all eligible land of the farm is placed in the Soil Bank. In this case, all land is paid for at the full base rate plus a 10 per cent bonus.

Details of the program are handled by the Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Committee office in each county. Three steps are needed before Soil Bank contracts are in effect:

First, initial application must be made at the County ASC Office by October 10. Second, during the period between October 10 and October 24, a dollar-and-cents offer will be made for Soil Bank land by the ASC to those farmers who have made application. Finally, a definite contract will be offered sometime after October 24.

"This program may be helpful to the many non-commercial farms in the State," Brundage commented. "Farmers who are interested should get further details right away so they can meet the initial deadline of October 10."

Godfrey is the German name for "at peace with God."

Annual Scout Trip Planned

WESTERNPORT—The 10th annual Tri-Towns Senior Scout Co-Ed trip to the vicinity of Washington has been scheduled for October 17-19 under the auspices of the Tri-Towns Senior Scout Council, according to Alton Fortney, Scout leader in charge of the program.

Camp Rockwood, the National Girl Scout camp at Bethesda, again will serve as a base for the trip.

On October 17, the group is scheduled to visit FBI headquarters, the Lincoln Museum, the house where Lincoln died, and Cinerama. The evening meal will be served at Fort Myer, Va.

The following morning, the group will visit and tour Bolling Air Force base. That afternoon Explorer Scouts will be given the opportunity for an airplane flight at the base while Senior Girl Scouts will be allowed to fly from the National Airport. The flights, however, depend upon weather conditions and written permission from each scout's parent or guardian.

Scouts taking the trip will meet at Westernport Elementary School at 7 a.m. on October 17 and will travel to Camp Rockwood by chartered bus. For traveling within the limits of the District of Columbia, the group will be provided with a police escort.

Reservations for the trip must be made with Alton Fortney, Luke, no later than Tuesday, September 30.

Tri-State Brigade Encampment Begins

PIEDMONT — The annual encampment of the Tri-State Brigade of the Uniform Rank, Knights of Pythias, will be held at the K. of P. campground at Burlington beginning today and continuing through Sunday.

Major General William D. Freyman, Westminister, Md., will be in command, assisted by Brigadier General Ormal Hoover, Piedmont. Delegates are expected from Westminister, Pittsburgh, Hanover, Pa., Washington, Gaithersburg, Md., and Ohio.

Knights Of Pythias Hold Convention

FREDERICK (AP)—About 300 delegates are expected here next week for the annual convention of the Grand Lodge Knights of Pythias of Maryland and the Grand Temple of Pythian Sisters.

The three-day session will open at the Francis Scott Key Hotel on Thursday, Sept. 11.

CHOSEN PRINCESS—Peggy Ann Shufflebarger, daughter of Mrs. Helen C. Shufflebarger, Pineville, has been selected as a princess for the Mountain State Forest Festival to be held October 1-4 at Elkins. She is a student at Mary Washington College of the University of Virginia, where she is a member of the YWCA and Wesley Choir.

Council Plans Sewer Probe

WESTERNPORT—An objection to the payment of municipal sewer fees was received at a meeting of the Mayor and Council Wednesday evening, with two residents informing the Council that no sewer line ran through their properties.

Mayor Ray L. Wilt informed Owen Lewis, Ross Street, and Lester Kirk, of near Kolberg's Hill, that the matter would be investigated. They would not be expected to pay fees if no sewer line was on their land, he explained.

The Liller Brothers Contracting Company of Cumberland was given a contract to improve the road in the vicinity of the home of Victory Post American Legion on Washington Street on a bid of $562.10.

It was estimated that it would take 230 feet of water and sewer pipe to extend them to the parsonage being built by the Christ Memorial Baptist Church on Roosevelt, Council was informed.

Council ordered that a $5,000 note due Citizens National Bank be paid off. Fifteen thousand dollars was borrowed when Philos Avenue was improved in the vicinity of the new Bruce High School, of which $10,000 has already been paid.

Weeds on Fourth Street between Church Street and the Western Maryland Railway tracks on Fisher Street and Philos Avenue were ordered cut by city employes.

Region Train Tour Slated By River Unit

DAVIS, W. Va. (UPI)—A train tour through the rugged North Branch Valley will feature a two-day meeting of the Interstate Commission on the Potomac River Basin Sept. 18-19.

The first day of the annual fall meeting at Blackwater Falls State Park near here will include addresses by John A. K. Donovan, commission chairman; West Virginia Conservation Director Warden M. Lane and Edward C. Crafts, assistant chief of the U. S. Forest Service.

Sen. John D. Hoblitzell (R - W. Va.) will address a banquet Thursday night.

On Friday, D. V. C. Birrell, assistant chief engineer of the Washington District of the U. S. Corps of Engineers will unveil plans for development of the Potomac River's North Branch watershed. Rep. Harley O. Staggers (D - W. Va.) will also speak at this session.

The train tour will follow, starting at nearby Thomas, W. Va., and winding through the canyon-like valley through Gormania, W. Va., to Westernport, Md.

The commission members and guests will view a big expansion project being undertaken by the West Virginia Pulp and Paper Co. at Luke, md.; the site of a proposed dam at Bloomington, Md., and a sludge plant being built at Westernport to treat wastes from the paper mill and municipal sewage from the towns of Luke and Westernport and Piedmont, W.Va.

Shower Fetes

(Continued from Page 8)

nick, Mrs. Mildred Green and Miss Gloria Greer.

Miss Lee, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. James Lee, Detmold Street, will become the bride of Donald Dye, son of Mrs. Leona Dye of Lonaconing and Howard Dye, Westernport, on September 12.

NEW TEACHER—Mrs. Ruby Shryock, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Vernon Livengood, Oldtown, is a member of the faculty of Mount Rainier Junior High School where she is teaching core in the seventh and eighth grades. She is a 1958 graduate of Frostburg State Teachers College.

Veep Elected By GOP Unit

KEYSER—Dwight Hovis, Keyser, was elected vice president of the Mineral County Young Republican Club at a recent meeting, succeeding Donald Horner, who left last month for Germany where he will teach school.

Hovis will also act as program and activities chairman.

John Chapman, president, called attention to the number of club members who will soon be leaving to continue their studies in colleges and urged a stepped-up effort in the membership drive during the remainder of this month.

Miss Louise Sites a member of the state executive committee, announced she will appoint a Young Republican Committee chairman and that selections of captains and co-captains then will be held. The work must be completed and reported to State President Jonn B. Fisher by September 15.

The next meeting of the club will be held October 7.

County Plans Pupil Census

A school census will be conducted Monday in public schools of Mineral County for the purpose of determning the needs of the future in the education field.

Schools Superintendent S. T. McGee said there will be no school classes as the teachers and bus drivers will be busy canvassing the homes throughout the county.

Similar census figures will be gathered every five years. Parents are being requested to have available the name and age of their children as well as other pertinent information which will be sought by the canvassers.

The census will include all persons up to 21 years of age, according to McGee, who said that all physical and mental handicaps will be recorded.

The census program will be conducted throughout West Virginia for the purpose of determining future educational needs and what can be done to alleviate the problem.

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Jack L. Carnell, Worshipful Master
William A. Darkey, Secretary.

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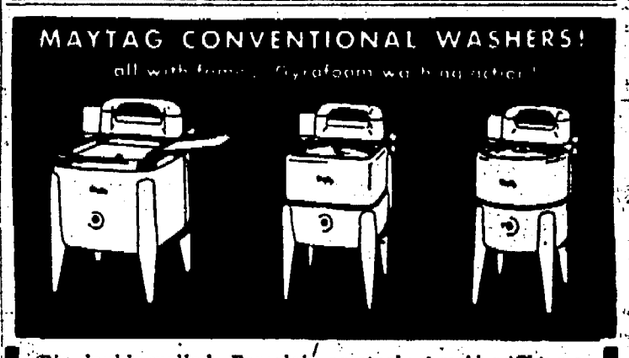

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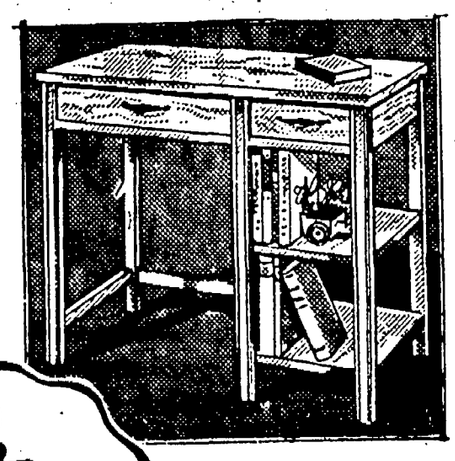

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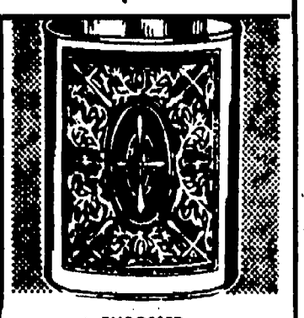

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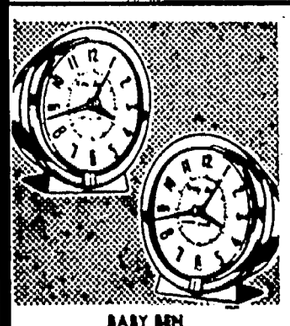

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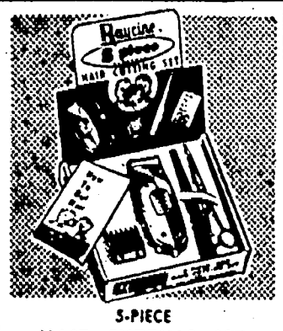

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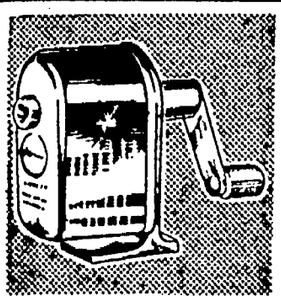

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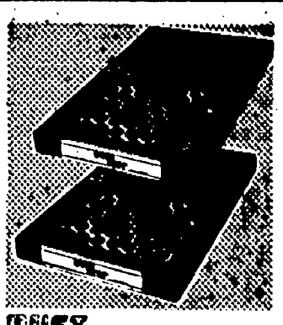

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